

# **Understanding Contemporary Foreign Internal Defense and Military Advisement: Not Just a Semantic Exercise**

**A Monograph  
by  
MAJ Jeffery N. James  
U.S. Army**



**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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This monograph was defended by the degree candidate on 16-04-08 and  
approved by the monograph director and reader named below.

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas Overdeer

Monograph Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacob W. Kipp, Ph.D.

Monograph Reader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stefan J. Banach, COL, IN

Director,  
School of Advanced  
Military Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

Director,  
Graduate Degree  
Programs

## **Abstract**

Understanding Contemporary Foreign Internal Defense and Military Advisement: Not Just a Semantic Exercise by MAJ Jeffery N. James, U.S. Army, 40 pages.

This monograph examines the effects of changes in the current operating environment and current operations in Iraq on the application of Foreign Internal Defense (FID) operations conducted by Special Operations Forces (SOF). This study identifies the forms and logic behind the function of Nation Assistance (NA), in order to determine if FID operations conducted by SOF and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts should remain separate missions.

This study first examines the evolution of FID from its roots in the Nixon Doctrine and inception in military doctrine. Within this analysis, a list of doctrinally based FID prerequisites is presented to use as a common analysis tool for a historical, a contemporary, and any future FID operation. The civil war in El Salvador is used for the historical analysis of FID operations and concluded as an excellent example of a FID operation conducted by SOF. Next, a contemporary FID operation with the 36<sup>th</sup> Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) is analyzed and the consequences of not meeting certain FID prerequisites exposed.

Finally, the same prerequisites are presented for a predictive analysis of the future using the Africa Command (AFRICOM) area of responsibility (AOR) as an impetus behind reviewing current military advisory doctrine. This paper introduces Security Forces Assistance (SFA) as emerging doctrine because of the contemporary requirement for large parts of the U.S. military to conduct military advisement. SFA is presented as an alternate advisory operation that is predicated on a large scale logic, performs the function of such an enterprise endeavor as building an army from virtually nothing, and is totally separate from the FID task. Ultimately, this monograph recommends that Foreign Internal Defense Operations conducted by Special Operations Forces and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts must remain separate missions.

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## Introduction

There are many historical examples of U.S. military advisory missions and specific applications of Foreign Internal Defense (FID) operations conducted by Special Operations Forces (SOF). However, there is little research that looks at the effects of changes in the current operating environment and current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan on the application of FID operations conducted by SOF. A detailed understanding of the application of FID conducted by SOF and conventional military advisory duties within the current operating environment should assist civilian and military leaders with the doctrinal employment of these different mission sets. In order to enable commanders and staff planners to doctrinally employ SOF within the FID task, FID operations conducted by SOF and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts must remain separate missions.

Foreign Internal Defense is not simply synonymous with other forms of military advisement under the umbrella of Nation Assistance (NA). For a better understanding of the problem, further deconstruction of the forms and logic of the function of Nation Assistance must occur. Nation Assistance is defined as..., “civil or military assistance, other than Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, rendered to a nation by U.S. forces within a nation’s territory during peacetime, crises, emergencies, or war, based on agreements mutually concluded between the United States and that nation”.<sup>1</sup> Nation Assistance programs include, but are not limited to, Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA), Security Assistance (SA), and Foreign Internal Defense. Therefore these programs are doctrinally accepted forms that serve the function of Nation Assistance.

Security Assistance “refers to a group of programs by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services to foreign nations by grant,

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-0: Operations*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), VII-6.

loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives.”<sup>2</sup> The most notable programs under Security Assistance are the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program, Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP), and the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. Overall, SA provides exchange education and training, financial support, and materiel needs to allied nations. However, by U.S. law, training and advisement under SA cannot involve combat.<sup>3</sup>

FID is the major military to military advisory effort under National Assistance. This paper examines the SOF legislatively mandated FID task in the current operating environment. The term FID is a program or set of programs, a task within the Universal Joint Task List (UJTL), a legislatively directed activity, a core task for SOF, and a type of operation. Uncompromising debates sometimes occur between individuals looking at FID through different lenses. This paper refers to FID as a legislatively directed activity for U.S. SOF.<sup>4</sup> The joint military definition of FID is “participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency.”<sup>5</sup>

In order to further define the scope, this monograph will only research military programs under FID. Military specific FID programs are doctrinally categorized as indirect support, direct support (not involving combat operations), or combat operations. This paper focuses on the military performance of both military training in a direct support role not involving combat and

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-0: Operations*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), VII-6-7.

<sup>3</sup> Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended, Public Law 87-195, (September 4, 1961).

<sup>4</sup> Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Public Law 99-433, 99<sup>th</sup> Cong., (October 1, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), I-1.

U.S. combat forces performing FID during combat operations. A specific emphasis will be placed on foreign internal defense conducted by Special Operations Forces.

The Contemporary Operating Environment (COE) has created the need for a massive military advisory effort. This requirement creates friction with the logic behind the FID task. However, the emerging doctrine of Security Force Assistance (SFA) is being sold as providing the capability for such an enterprise endeavor. Developed by the Joint Center for International Security Forces Assistance, SFA is another form of military to military advisory effort under NA that may relieve the friction and help fulfill a nation's military advisory needs. What differentiates between FID and SFA as forms of military advisement is the logic behind them. SFA is defined as "all United States government actions taken in concert with a host nation to generate, employ, transition and sustain the host nation's security forces in support of their national requirements, U.S. Theater Security Cooperation plans, operations and contingency plans, campaigns, and operations".<sup>6</sup> Part of the logic that differentiates SFA from FID is that SFA deals with both external and internal threats to the nation. The most significant differentiation is scope. Properly planned at the combatant command level, forces conducting SFA can construct or reconstruct foreign security forces from the ground up, if necessary. Part of this monograph will identify the logic behind FID and then compare that with the emerging concept of SFA.

The foundation for the military application of FID is found in the national strategic documents and speeches that encompass the Nixon (Guam) Doctrine.<sup>7</sup> Within the military, the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) publishes the Army's field manual for Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Operations. Another important military document is the Army's new counterinsurgency (COIN) manual,

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<sup>6</sup> Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance, *Security Force Assistance Planner's Guide Draft*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2006), 5.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), I-2.



which suggests that training foreign security forces is a core task for every unit within all the services.<sup>8</sup> The new COIN manual is important because the terms Foreign Internal Defense and counterinsurgency operations have been almost synonymous since the military adopted the term FID in 1976.<sup>9</sup> Recently some writers have attempted to define, re-define, or have actually confused the terms associated with military advisement. Some contemporary military writers claim that the entire military needs to have more of a “FID mindset.”<sup>10</sup> Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl has written a recommendation to stand up an entire advisory corps to conduct FID.<sup>11</sup> In an attempt to gain better clarity on advisory missions, the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance (JCISFA) has developed a planning guide that defines Security Force Assistance (SFA) as a completely separate mission from FID. An objective of this monograph is to determine the effects of all these changes in concepts on the application of SOF FID.

The criteria that will be applied to the research question are a set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites. These prerequisites allow a comparison between a historical FID example and a contemporary FID operation. These prerequisites are: determining if the FID operation is a necessary SOF mission, U.S. military assistance is requested by the host nation, the threat to the host nation is internal, the host nation has or is willing to create an Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) strategy, and the host nation is providing the preponderance of forces. Additionally, when considering the application of SOF to conduct FID operations, planners should add an analysis of SOF unique capabilities in addition to the above FID prerequisites. Certain unique capabilities are what differentiate FID operations conducted by SOF from other

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Publishing Directorate, 2006), 6-3.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3.1: Foreign Internal Defense*. (Maxwell Air Force Base: AL: Air Force Doctrine Center, 2007), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Eric J. Peltzer, *Using Foreign Internal Defense and Unconventional Warfare to Conduct Global Counter Insurgency*. (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2006), 12-22.

<sup>11</sup> John Nagl, *Institutionalizing adaption: It's time for a permanent Army Advisor Corps*. (Washington, D.C.: Center for a New American Study, 2007), 1-8.

FID and advisory missions. Special Operations Forces possess unique functional skills, cultural understanding, language skills, and are regionally focused. Additionally, SOF operates well in politically sensitive environments.

The Cold War, the end of the war in Vietnam, and President Nixon's National Security Strategy set the backdrop for the current concepts for FID. Specifically, the Nixon Doctrine, as part of the Nixon Administration's national security policy of "Realistic Deterrence", had a large impact on shaping the contemporary application of FID. Historically, the strong national opinion against the war in Vietnam and the costs of direct involvement in what was ultimately a proxy war between the U.S. and USSR during the Cold War led President Nixon to seek other avenues of foreign policy implementation. One of the main efforts was the promotion of military assistance to allied nations. A key component of the military assistance was the caveat that the administration placed a heavy emphasis on indirect U.S. military presence with a prerequisite that the host nation (HN) provides the preponderance of forces for its own self-defense.

The indirect nature of military troop presence and involvement, the preponderance of host nation forces, and military assistance as a way to further achieve national security have been the cornerstone prerequisites for the concept of FID since its inception.<sup>12</sup> Within these foundational requirements, the United States provided military assistance to allied states in an attempt to counter global communism. The U.S. military involvement in the civil war in El Salvador from 1981 to 1993 is an excellent example of U.S. FID operations that followed a set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites.

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<sup>12</sup> The military adopted the term FID in 1976. U.S. Department of Defense, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3.1: Foreign Internal Defense*. (Maxwell Air Force Base: AL: Air Force Doctrine Center, 2007), 1.

The Nunn-Cohen amendment to the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act legislatively directed Foreign Internal Defense as a core task for U.S. Special Operations Forces.<sup>13</sup> From that time until the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the majority of U.S. SOF led FID operations were in direct support, not involving combat, providing training and advisory assistance to a host nation. The majority of these programs involved, joint and multinational exercises, exchange programs, and humanitarian demining. However, the post 9/11 security environment created a change to the indirect nature of military assistance. In practice, U.S. foreign policy shifted from nation assistance to nation building and thus changed the nature of FID application. The change in the security environment forced the United States to provide military assistance to failed, failing, or new states. This differed from the original logic of providing support to established states with capable militaries. These aforementioned weak states did not have the national security infrastructure to guide and maintain their own security. This change is a major friction point as it is contrary to current military doctrinal guidance that states FID efforts support a host nation's Internal Defense and Development strategy.<sup>14</sup>

An IDAD strategy is the “full range of measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and to protect itself from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. It focuses on building viable institutions that respond to the needs of society.”<sup>15</sup> This preemptive strategy blends the four functions of balanced development, security, neutralization and mobilization to prevent or counter an emerging threat. Based on the prerequisite that a host nation must have or be capable of producing an IDAD strategy, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi

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<sup>13</sup> Nunn-Cohen Amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Public Law 99-433, 99<sup>th</sup> Cong., (October 1, 1986).

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), I-1.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, GL-7.

Freedom (OIF) did not meet one of the major doctrinally based prerequisites for the application of FID.

Furthermore, the requirement to create a foreign nation's entire military and security forces from virtually nothing was a strain on contemporary FID operations conducted by SOF due to the sheer scale of effort. Specific to OIF, the decision to disband the Iraqi military created a great demand for military advisory effort. This is contrary to the doctrinal intent of indirect and minimal U.S. presence and the host nation providing the preponderance of forces as two of the prerequisites for FID application. Additionally, FID activities generally focus on internal threats with few exceptions and do not focus on a military's ability to deter external threats or increase their expeditionary capability. In reality, the majority of U.S. SOF are currently decisively engaged in OIF and OEF.<sup>16</sup> This leaves little SOF manpower for FID support to other nations requiring military assistance around the globe, which misses an exploitable opportunity to project U.S. policy and objectives in support of the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

Another fact that is germane to the understanding of FID is a need for increased focus on the GWOT as we look past OEF and OIF and the potential for increased operations in Africa as a new Geographic Combatant Command, Africa Command (AFRICOM), is activated. The establishment of AFRICOM signals a potential increase in military operations within Africa and is the impetus to review and expand our doctrine in the wake of the practical shift from nation assistance to nation building. This is significant because a number of failed or failing states within the AFRICOM area of responsibility may not have an IDAD strategy, may have active insurgent activities past the initial phases, and their military advisement needs may not meet the ideal prerequisites for FID operations conducted by SOF. If the basic, doctrinally based FID pre-requisites aren't met in these cases, then commanders and planners should recommend using conventional

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<sup>16</sup> Over 85 percent of SOF deployments were to the Central Command's area of responsibility in 2006. United States Special Operations Command, *USSOCOM Posture Statement 2007*. (MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2007), 11.

forces to conduct SFA to build up a viable army then turn the effort over for the implementation of FID or another Nation Assistance program if necessary.

This paper will first analyze the international relations environment and national security strategy that set the foundation for the current FID concept. A historical review of the national security policies under President Nixon and the relevant aspects of the Cold War and the end of the war in Vietnam will set the benchmark for understanding the foundational framework of the FID concept. This benchmark will then be used to analyze the shift from nation assistance through indirect military presence to contemporary effort of nation building requiring direct military advisement sometimes involving combat.

Ultimately, there is a point of friction between the logic behind FID and its implementation in the current operating environment. In order to further analyze that point of friction this monograph will apply a set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites to analyze a historical analysis of El Salvador to establish a base line of a FID operation doctrinally performed. The same prerequisites will be used to analyze FID operations conducted by Special Forces in Iraq in 2004. The use of the prerequisites to dissect the two historical analyses will be similar and solely sufficient in the case of the analyzing the advisory effort in El Salvador. Because the case in Iraq broke from doctrine, the DOTMLPF construct will be additionally applied to show the consequences of not meeting the necessary prerequisites.<sup>17</sup> This contemporary analysis will have specific emphasis on current FID operations with respect to the Global War on Terror, OEF, and OIF. Personal experiences from OIF with the 36<sup>th</sup> Iraqi Commando Battalion will be used to highlight that both direct support FID and combat FID occurring simultaneously requires doctrinal update and possibly organizational changes.

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<sup>17</sup> Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF).

This will then lead to a discussion on the significance of military advisement in the AFRICOM area of responsibility and show how the changes identified in the COE analysis apply to that Area of Responsibility (AOR). The analysis will recommend the proper use of SOF and conventional forces during FID and other forms of foreign military advisory missions. This paper will show that FID operations conducted by SOF and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts must remain separate missions.

## **The Evolution of FID**

The U.S. military advisory missions from Vietnam to current operations in support of the Global War on Terror all contain certain aspects of the concepts found in the Nixon Doctrine. However, little attention has been paid to the evolution of FID from its foundational start in the Nixon Administration to the current National Security Strategy. A foundational understanding of applicable U.S. national security policies, the evolution of US SOF with regard to FID being identified as a core task, and the emergence of FID doctrine within the military will provide a baseline of understanding for further historical analysis. There has been a point of change within our security environment which should cause our civilian and military leaders to re-evaluate their understanding of FID operations and the application of military forces within that effort.

This chapter analyzes the international relations environment and national security strategy that set the foundation for the current FID concept. A historical review of the national security policies under President Nixon and the relevant aspects of the Cold War will set the benchmark for understanding the foundational framework of the FID concept. This benchmark will then be used to analyze the shift from nation assistance through indirect military presence to nation building sometimes requiring direct military advisement including combat. This analysis will require examination of the national security policies and strategies that affected military advisory missions from the Nixon Administration through to the current Bush Administration.

Further analysis of the immediate pre- and post-9/11 security environments will help determine how the contemporary operating environment changed and the effects those changes have had on FID operations. Additionally, an exploration of FID as a legislatively directed activity for US SOF will add further understanding and context to the issue. Specific emphasis will be placed on military FID doctrine and the Internal Defense and Development strategy as a main FID characteristic.

President Nixon inherited a domestic situation in which Clausewitz's trinity of government, military and the people was out of balance. The American people were passionately against the war and caused a change in American policy. During the post-Vietnam era, the United States populous was not willing to invest national blood and treasure in another proxy conflict of the Cold War. The president was challenged to develop a more indirect means of combating the spread of global communism. One avenue toward achieving this objective was to strengthen U.S. partnership with friendly or neutral countries. Along this line of logic, the military provided defense-related services to foreign nations through programs under the Security Assistance activity.

Under President Nixon and a national security strategy of Realistic Deterrence, the United States focused on assisting countries vital to U.S. security in which military assistance would be mutually beneficial.<sup>18</sup> A supporting concept was an emphasis on reducing direct military presence to a more indirect approach. President Nixon stipulated in a press conference in Guam, "we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense".<sup>19</sup> This emphasis on indirect military presence and the caveat that the host nation is responsible for the majority of manpower and effort became the foundation for Foreign Internal Defense operations for the next twenty-five years.

Using the Nixon Doctrine as a foundation, the U.S. military adopted the term Foreign Internal Defense in 1976.<sup>20</sup> FID became a core task for SOF in 1986 under the Nunn-Cohen amendment to the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Current U.S. doctrine outlines the description, principles, and functions of one of the most important FID prerequisites: the Internal

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<sup>18</sup> Town Hall Meeting on National Security Policy, and Melvin R. Laird, *The Nixon Doctrine* (Washington, D.C., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. 1972), 8-16.

<sup>19</sup> Richard M. Nixon, (November 3, 1969). President Nixon's Speech on "Vietnamization" (<http://vietnam.vassar.edu/doc14.html>)(reprint).

<sup>20</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Air Force Doctrine Document 2-3.1: Foreign Internal Defense*. (Maxwell Air Force Base: AL: Air Force Doctrine Center, 2007), 1.



Development and Defense strategy. A host nation's IDAD strategy is ideally a preemptive strategy but can be active in order to combat an insurgency, illicit drugs, terror, or other internal threats.<sup>21</sup> The presence of an IDAD strategy or willingness of a host nation to develop such a strategy is essentially required prior to U.S. military assistance. U.S. assistance to the government of El Salvador in the 1980s is an example of FID support to a host nation's IDAD. Prior to military intervention, the U.S. Southern Command assisted the El Salvador Armed Forces in developing a national military strategy to combat an insurgency.<sup>22</sup> This military strategy was in essence the El Salvadoran IDAD strategy in which U.S. FID support efforts were nested. A more detailed historical analysis of the advisory effort in El Salvador compared to a doctrinally based set of prerequisites is the focus of chapter two of this monograph.

In December 1989, Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and George H.W. Bush declared the Cold War officially over at a summit meeting in Malta. The end of the Cold War brought a time of uncertainty to the international security environment. During this time the United States and other nations began to increasingly use their military to intervene in humanitarian disasters. In the 1990s, President Clinton developed a security strategy that stipulated military involvement and intervention in foreign civil conflict resolutions and humanitarian crises.<sup>23</sup> Ultimately, all military action is potentially an extension of policy. The implication for the military is that when policy shifted, it had an effect on the potential use of SOF and FID doctrine.

The Clinton Administration's 1996 Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement suggested future military action similar to U.S. military involvements in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia.

Although these operations had an impact on the use of the conventional military as peacekeepers,

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<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), B-1.

<sup>22</sup> Robert D. Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18 (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 83-103.

<sup>23</sup> Jeffrey Clark *Lessons Relearned: The Urgent Need to Replace Post-conflict Improvisation with Policy* (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, U.S. Army War College, 2005), 1-6.

they did not have a great impact on FID operations conducted by SOF. The impact for SOF is in the sense that the U.S. moved from nation assistance to nation building. Those opposed to the Clinton Doctrine sometimes spun humanitarian efforts as “nation building” in a pejorative sense implying a misuse of the military. A great deal of political consternation sprang from the United States’ transition from indirect nation assistance to the direct nation building during the post Cold War period before the September 11 terrorist attacks.

President George W. Bush criticized the use of the military under the Clinton Administration. As a presidential candidate in 2000, George W. Bush stated, “I don’t think our troops ought to be used for what’s called nation-building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war.”<sup>24</sup> Bush also promised an increased effort toward political solutions that would allow military withdrawal from the Balkans.<sup>25</sup> Regardless of the pejorative spin on nation building, the perceived intent of the Bush Administration was to redefine the exact use for U.S. military power. The event that changed American politics and President George W. Bush’s view on nation building was the September 11 terrorist attacks.

The point of change in the security environment was the change from the uncertainty of a post Cold War environment to a clearly identified war against terror. One of the consequences of fighting a war against a tactic used by mostly non-state actors is that in general, the United States may have to provide support to, or take action against, failed or failing states. In the case of both wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States military assumed a large amount of the burden of post-conflict nation building. The consequences of the counter attacks on Al Qaeda and the Taliban government in Afghanistan and the removal of Saddam Hussein from his dictatorship of Iraq placed the U.S. military in the “nation building” business. This move from U.S. sponsored

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<sup>24</sup> Reference Somalia and Haiti, The second Gore-Bush presidential debate referenced at the Commission on Presidential Debates website <http://www.debates.org/pages/trans2000b.html> (accessed on November 13, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Speech named A Period of Consequences given to the Citadel, South Carolina, September 23, 1999.

nation assistance to nation building has created confusing guidance and misuse of terms that are not synonymous. Counterinsurgency, Foreign Internal Defense, and Security Force Assistance have been used synonymously with military advisement. A clarification of terms and a recommendation for future use are included within this monograph.

Within the current operating environment, there seems to be a potential for supporting failed or failing states in order to combat the conditions that promote trans-national terrorism. The United States must provide support to failed or failing states when our security interests are threatened because of the danger of allowing trans-national terrorism to spread unchecked. When this support includes direct military advisory support either involving or not involving combat operations, additional analysis must be made during the troop to task assessment. Commanders and planners must determine if the current situation necessitates a FID operation. If a FID operation is decided then planners must additionally determine if the situation requires Special Operations Forces. Further analysis of the situation should determine if the conditions surrounding the proposed FID operation meet certain doctrinally based FID prerequisites.

Carl von Clausewitz wrote that war is an extension of policy by another means.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps that claim should be expanded to include all forms of conflict across the spectrum as additional extensions of policy. The extension of U.S. national security policies within the current operating environment may have caused a major amount of friction with respect to the application of military advisement. The terrorist attacks, on September 11, caused a major change in the international security environment. This change has potentially forced the United States to provide direct support to failed or failing states. In some cases this support includes direct military advisory support involving combat. The major friction point is that in most cases this

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<sup>26</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, Michael Eliot Howard, and Peter Paret. *On War*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 89.

direct advisory support does not meet one or all of the suggested prerequisites but is still referred to as FID.

Vietnam began as an advisory mission and eventually required over a half a million U.S. servicemen.<sup>27</sup> Neither post intervention governments of Afghanistan nor Iraq have a government capable of determining the needs required under an IDAD strategy. These examples involve a large use of military resources as part of an intense American contribution. Historically, the U.S. counter-insurgency support to El Salvador is an excellent example of a situation that meets a set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites and a historical analysis of U.S. FID operations in El Salvador is the subject of the next chapter.

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<sup>27</sup> There were nearly 525,000 troops serving in South Vietnam in November 1967, Mark Perry, *Four Stars* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 179.

## Historical FID Analysis (El Salvador)

There are multiple historical examples of U.S. military advisory missions that pre-date the establishment of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the Goldwater-Nichols Act, and FID military doctrine. Very few of these historical accounts attempt to analyze FID utilizing a set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites in order to differentiate military advisory missions from FID operations. A lack of differentiation between military advisement and FID is ambiguous and leaves the historical analysis open to challenge on whether or not it is really an example of Foreign Internal Defense. By applying a suggested set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites to an analysis of the El Salvador advisory effort we can understand the importance of those prerequisites. This chapter will show that Operations, Plans, and Training Team (OPATT) efforts in support of the counter-insurgency operations in El Salvador were an excellent example of FID operations.

This chapter will frame the political issues surrounding the U.S. involvement in El Salvador and provide a brief background history of the civil war in El Salvador. This chapter will use the doctrinally based FID prerequisites, originally presented in the introduction, chapter in the historical analysis of El Salvador to evaluate whether or not a FID operation was conducted according to doctrine. A final overall analysis will determine if the FID operation in El Salvador was in fact a good baseline to compare against other case studies in FID.

The Reagan Doctrine as a continuance of the Monroe Doctrine drove the United States' involvement in El Salvador.<sup>28</sup> The protection of the Western Hemisphere in this instance was specifically against the further spread of Communism. The United States did not want another

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<sup>28</sup> Reagan Doctrine refers to the compilation of national security policies and strategies under President Ronald Reagan. The Monroe Doctrine refers to the U.S. doctrine presented under President James Monroe that declared that European powers could no longer colonize the American continent and that the United States would take an active role in enforcing that policy and in protection of the Western Hemisphere. Gaddis Smith, *The Last Years of the Monroe Doctrine 1945-1993* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 3-8.

Central American country to fall prey to a communist revolutionary movement. In 1979, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) led a Marxist revolution that overthrew the Somoza government in Nicaragua. Soon after, Nicaragua began providing support to a communist revolution in El Salvador along with additional support from Cuba, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union. The United States provided military advisory support to the government of El Salvador in response to the growing communist backed insurgency threatening the internal stability of the country. Advisory support began in 1981 and initially focused on expansion, training, and increased professionalism in a broad sense over the whole El Salvador Armed Forces (ESAF).<sup>29</sup> These advisors initially took the form of Mobile Training Teams (MTT). Concurrently, the military group at the U.S. embassy set conditions at the national level and MTTs grew the military in size and capability overtime from 11,000 to 56,000.<sup>30</sup> Because of the opposing outside intervention of the United States and the Soviet Union, this conflict has sometimes been labeled the last battle of the Cold War.

In 1984, U.S. OPATT began deploying to advise each El Salvadoran Army brigade and the training effort shifted to focus more on counterinsurgency tactics.<sup>31</sup> The OPATT structure was initially two combat arms officers and one military intelligence officer. By 1985, that structure was modified to require a Special Forces preferred team chief and two Special Forces warrant officers or noncommissioned officers.<sup>32</sup> Regardless of structure, these advisors were forbidden to participate in combat operations. The flow of OPATT duties over time changed from

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<sup>29</sup> Robert D. Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18 (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 85-86

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 94

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 88-94

<sup>32</sup> Cecil E Bailey, "OPATT: The U.S. Army SF Advisers in El Salvador," *Special Warfare* (December 2004): 18-29, <http://www.proquest.com.lumen.cgscarl.com/>(accessed December 20, 2007).

trainers to advisors to observers. U.S. military advisory support to El Salvador lasted roughly 12 years with the last OPATT personnel leaving El Salvador in 1993.

This paper has argued that certain doctrinally based prerequisites ought to exist prior to implementation of a FID operation. The first prerequisite is SOF specific and is taken from the SOF operational mission criteria. It is imperative that commanders and SOF planners evaluate every consideration for the employment SOF.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, the first FID prerequisite is to determine if the advisory mission is appropriate for SOF. Second, it is imperative that the host nation request U.S. military assistance versus receiving outside help involuntarily. Third, the threat to the host nation is internal with regard to the application of a Foreign Internal Defense operations or programs. Fourth, the host nation must have or is willing to create an IDAD strategy as a plan to combat the internal threat. Lastly, the host nation should provide the preponderance of forces to counter the threat.

As already stated, FID is a core task for SOF but FID is not the sole domain of SOF. As with every SOF operation, commanders and planners must ensure that the assigned mission is appropriate for SOF. The primary role of SOF in FID is to “train, advise, and assist host nation military and paramilitary forces with the tasks that require their unique capabilities”.<sup>34</sup> OPATT teams in El Salvador required Special Forces qualified warrant officers or non-commissioned warrant officers because of their regional orientation, language capability, and operations and intelligence expertise. The billet for OPATT team chief was initially slotted for any combat arms officer but after Special Forces became a branch, the billet was recoded for a Special Forces officer.<sup>35</sup> Special Forces officers were sought after for this mission because of the requirement to

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<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-05: Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2003), I9-I10.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, II-7.

<sup>35</sup> HQDA, General Order 35, Pursuant to the authority contained in Title 10, United States Code, section 3063(a)(13), the Special Forces Branch is established as a basic branch of the Army effective 9 April 1987.

work closely with a host nation commander. One of the specific tasks for the advisors was to improve human rights. This delicate situation required personnel that were trained in how to deal with host nation commanders that are suspicious of anyone looking over their shoulders. The small pool of qualified officers and enlisted advisors resulted in soldiers having multiple tours in El Salvador, which strengthened rapport with the host nation personnel, maintained a high degree of cultural awareness and provided unparalleled continuity for the mission.

A second prerequisite is that the host nation requests U.S. military assistance as apposed to a forced or coerced U.S. intervention. It is evident that President Reagan understood the policies and lessons learned from the Vietnam War in his approach to an intervention in El Salvador. It is apparent that although skeptical because of culturally sensitive issues, like human rights violations, the ESAF acknowledged the need for U.S. military advisory assistance to combat the growing insurgency. Although critical to the protection of the Western Hemisphere, U.S. assistance was gradually presented to the government of El Salvador initially through economic aid and then through military advisement.<sup>36</sup>

Another prerequisite for Foreign Internal Defense is that the threat to the host nation is internal. When supporting a nation's IDAD strategy, the FID intervention is ideally preemptive but may become an active strategy to combat insurgency, illicit drugs, terror, or other internal threats.<sup>37</sup> El Salvador had in recent history suffered from poor governance and a military coup. These conditions gave rise to opposition guerrilla bands that were individually ineffective. Five of the major guerrilla groups banded together to form the Farabundo Marti para Liberacion Nacional (FMLN). The FMLN, with external support from Nicaragua, Cuba, Vietnam and the Soviet Union, became a dangerous internal threat and was the driving force for a U.S. requested

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<sup>36</sup> Bob Benning, War in El Salvador; The Policies of President Reagan and The Lessons Learned For Today (Maxwell AFB, AL, Air University, 2003),11-21.

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), B-1.



intervention. The challenge for the ESAF was how to counter the growing insurgency and OPATTs provided that expertise.

The next prerequisite is the fact that the host nation has or is willing to create an IDAD strategy. U.S. Southern Command sent a strategy planning team led by a U.S. brigadier general to assist the ESAF General Staff with the development of a national military strategy for combating their internal threat.<sup>38</sup> That national military strategy led to MTTs and OPATT in order to provide advisory support to the ESAF on countering the insurgency. Although sometimes criticized as not providing enough guidance, the military group at the U.S. embassy provided guidance based on the El Salvadorian National Military Strategy. This strategy was nested with other theater security cooperation activities and interventions by other U.S. government agencies. The presence of an IDAD-type document facilitated unified action across all U.S. elements of national power.

A final prerequisite is that the host nation must provide the preponderance of forces for its own defense. Again, taking lessons learned from the Vietnam War, the U.S. wished to avoid large-scale U.S. military involvement in El Salvador. Members of the U.S. executive branch through U.S. Southern Command capped the size of the military group (MILGROUP) in El Salvador at 55 personnel. This maximum cap on military advisors is evidence of the adherence to the indirect nature of FID even in protection of the Western Hemisphere. The cap intentionally prevented U.S. advisors from taking a combat role and a lead in El Salvadorian defense. By limiting the U.S. military involvement to an advisory role, in essence direct support FID not involving combat, the U.S. government ensured that the counterinsurgency fight was conducted with, through and by the ESAF.

Ultimately, the government in El Salvador was not overturned by a communist revolution. Although the U.S. FID intervention in El Salvador cannot be considered the sole

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<sup>38</sup> Robert D. Ramsey, *Advising Indigenous Forces: American Advisors in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador*, Global War on Terrorism Occasional Paper 18 (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 85.

cause for successfully defeating the insurgency, it was definitely a contributing factor. Academic arguments attribute overall success to government reforms that eventually eroded the people's desire to side with the insurgents. A key part of that government reform was the professionalization of the military via U.S. FID which improved human rights abuses and overall counterinsurgency capabilities. Not only was the FID intervention successful but it also followed the doctrinally based prerequisites.

In summary, the FID mission in El Salvador was an appropriate mission for SOF personnel. The training of indigenous personnel on counterinsurgency operations was, and still is, a core mission for U.S. Special Forces. The government of El Salvador both requested U.S. direct military support and was able to develop an IDAD strategy in the form of a national military strategy that addressed how to combat the growing insurgency. A Foreign Internal Defense operation was a logically applicable intervention because the nature of the threat was internal. Finally, the MILGROUP cap on advisory personnel ensured the U.S. military personnel did not take a lead combat role and forced the ESAF to provide the preponderance for forces for the defense of their country.

By applying a suggested set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites to a historical FID operation in El Salvador, we gained an understanding of the importance of those prerequisites. This chapter has shown that FID operations conducted by a few Special Forces advisors met all the FID prerequisites and establishes base line knowledge of a FID operation doctrinally performed. OPATT efforts in support of the counter-insurgency operations in El Salvador were an excellent example of FID operations. In the next chapter we will use the same prerequisites to analyze FID operations conducted by Special Forces in Iraq in 2004.

## Contemporary FID Analysis (Iraq)

A direct support FID operation involving combat with the Iraqi 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion in 2004 will serve as a contemporary FID analysis. The intent is not to hold doctrine as gospel but to attempt to understand the ideal situation and be able to apply art in the execution of FID operations conducted by SOF. By applying a suggested set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites to an analysis of a contemporary FID operation we can continue further understanding the importance of those prerequisites. This chapter will show that combat FID operations conducted by SOF in support of the Iraqi 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion did not meet all the FID prerequisites and were not a good example of FID operations.

A contemporary combat FID analysis from Iraq will serve as contrast to the previous example of FID operations in El Salvador that met all of the suggested FID prerequisites. A brief background of the 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion will provide the necessary setting for those unfamiliar with this Iraqi special purpose force. After the context is established this chapter will provide a detailed discussion of each of the recommended prerequisites. The addition of the DOTMLPF<sup>39</sup> construct will add structure to the consequences of not meeting certain prerequisites. This chapter will close with a final conclusion and transition to the potential future for FID operations.

In November 2003, the Coalitional Provisional Authority (CPA), the Commander Central Command (COMCENTCOM), the Combined Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7), and the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) made a joint decision to form a Baghdad based, 500-man battalion by integrating militiamen from five major political parties.<sup>40</sup> The purpose was to establish a visible,

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<sup>39</sup> Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF)

<sup>40</sup> The five major political parties were: Iraqi National Accord (INA), Iraqi National Congress (INC), Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI).

integrated, non-political Iraqi battalion, assisted by U.S. Special Forces, to conduct offensive operations in the Baghdad area.<sup>41</sup> The endstate was to provide a credible, indigenous capability for the national capital. This capability would contribute to greater security and demonstrate the commitment of the Iraqi people to the establishment of a free, democratic, and secure Iraq.<sup>42</sup>

Each political organization provided an equal number of recruits to ensure that all political parties were equally represented across the battalion structure. This forced political integration was an initial attempt to break down sectarianism within the new Iraqi security forces. The intent was to produce well-trained, physically fit men that served a nation and not just one party. The battalion was initially created from scratch as an Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) unit. Once fully operational, the new Iraqi battalion was subordinate to CJTF-7 and under the operational control (OPCON) of 1<sup>st</sup> Armor Division.<sup>43</sup> U.S. Special Forces (USSF) advisors from the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Arabian Peninsula (CJSOTF-AP) were embedded within the battalion with the tasks to organize, train and equip.

Whereas regular ICDC units were given minor civic duties such as traffic control points under strict supervision of coalition forces, the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC was to be different. There were three specific differences with this battalion when compared with a standard ICDC battalion. First, the battalion would conduct offensive operations such as reconnaissance, surveillance, raids, and cordon and search operations to kill or capture Former Regime Elements (FRE) engaged in anti-Iraqi and anti-coalition activities. Secondly, instead of being embedded into a Coalition Force (CF) unit the battalion had United States Special Forces soldiers embedded as advisors. Lastly, the battalion was organized to have an organic leadership structure.

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<sup>41</sup> Based on guidance from the Coalition Forces Special Operations Component Command (CFSOCC) at CENTCOM that was used by Special Forces Operational Detachments Alpha (SFODA) during pre-mission planning in January 2004.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Taken from a modification to fragmentary order (FRAGO 406A) concerning the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps supplementing an Operations Order (OPORD 03-215 (IRON STABILITY)).

Two Special Forces Operational Detachments-Alpha (SFODA) began initial staging and reception on 8 December 2003.<sup>44</sup> After initial reception, Coalition forces performed six days of ICDC Initial Entry Training. Upon completion of the basic training, the Special Forces detachments performed ten days of SOF led training. The abbreviated timeline to train an Iraqi unit from virtually nothing was in order to meet the imposed deadline of 26 December 2003 for initial operational capability and employment.

In accordance with Coalition Forces Special Operations Component Command (CFSOCC) guidance, the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC Battalion was prepared to conduct limited combined offensive operations by the end of December 2003. By 12 December 2003, the battalion unit strength was 390 men out of 540 authorized, and was organized into a headquarters element, a scout platoon and four companies. The 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC battalion began conducting combined operations with Coalition Forces in Baghdad to kill or capture anti-Iraqi and anti-coalition forces in support of IGC, CPA, and CJTF-7 objectives.<sup>45</sup>

In February 2004, units from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group transferred the FID mission to units from their sister 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion. Two SFODAs and one split team from another SFODA continued the mission of FID operations involving combat operations.<sup>46</sup> The disposition of the Iraqi battalion's basing and area of operation was spread across Baghdad. The battalion headquarters, scout platoon and one company were located at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Dakota in central Baghdad. One company was located at the Ministry of Oil in western Baghdad. A second company was located at FOB Mule Skinner also in western Baghdad. The last company

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<sup>44</sup> Taken from After Action Reviews received during the Transfer of Authority between SFODAs in February 2004.

<sup>45</sup> Taken from a CFSOCC mission statement concerning the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC battalion.

<sup>46</sup> The author, Major Jeffery James was the detachment commander of an SFODA and senior advisor to the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC Battalion during the time period presented in this contemporary analysis.

was located at FOB Falcon in southern Baghdad. The embedded Special Forces advisory responsibility was distributed across three SFODAs.

The time period covered within the contemporary analysis is from December 2003 through July 2004. The significance of this time is that it represents the foundational period for FID operations conducted by SOF in Iraq. This period begins with the unit's inception in December 2003 and culminates with battalion-size, major combat operations in the First Battle for Fallujah in April 2004. The frustrations and challenges to the SOF advisors during this pivotal time are represented below when compared to the doctrinally based, FID prerequisites.

The first prerequisite is common to all SOF missions and asks the following question. Is this an appropriate mission for SOF? This is the very question asked by 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group soldiers during their initial tasking. An after action review comment from 1/5 SFG (A) was to limit the FID contribution to tasks and skills that other coalition force units could not train the Iraqis to conduct.<sup>47</sup> The CFSOCC key tasks were: to organize, train, and equip the Iraqi force, provide advisory support to the planning and conduct of operations, conduct additional training to increase capabilities, and finally to integrate those capabilities into coalition operations.<sup>48</sup> At the time, U.S. Special Forces were the only unit with the prerequisite skills to embed as advisors and accomplish this mission on such an abbreviated timeline.

Requiring that the host nation request U.S. military assistance is a second prerequisite. In this case study, the United States ousted Saddam Hussein and obtained total regime change in Iraq. It may seem trivial at first, but the involuntary environment surrounding the military advisory mission had significant consequences. Requiring a host nation to request U.S. military assistance implies several points of significance. A voluntary request signifies that the host nation has determined the nature of the threat to the government. Next, there is an implication that the

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<sup>47</sup> After Action Review comments from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) given to SFODAs from 2/5 SFG (A) for pre-mission planning in preparation for transfer of authority.

<sup>48</sup> Guidance from CENTCOM CFSOCC received by SFODAs during pre-mission planning.

functioning government can or will develop a strategy to counter the threat using all forms of national power. Lastly, the request comes with a negotiated agreement on use of forces and force ratios where the host nation provides the bulk of manpower to combat the threat.

Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, most definitely did not request military assistance to counter an internal threat. After the invasion, a functional Iraqi government was slow to follow. Until the summer of 2004, the CPA, CJTF-7, and Iraqi Governing Council shared the governing power of Iraq. During the period of this analysis, there was not a single unifying host nation request for U.S. military assistance with regard to military advisement. Therefore, the point of significance is that the essence of the voluntary request did not set the foundation for three of the next recommended prerequisites.

The next prerequisite for Foreign Internal Defense requires the threat to the host nation actually be internal. Doctrinally, a FID intervention supports an IDAD strategy that prevents or combats insurgency, illicit drugs, terror or some other internal threat.<sup>49</sup> Ideally the FID intervention should be preemptive, however the foundation of the military advisory mission in Iraq was far from ideal. There were both internal and external threats to the transitional government in Iraq. There was not an external threat in the conventional sense of another state's army invading Iraq. However, porous borders allowed external state sponsored and non-state actors to contribute to lawlessness, terrorist activities, and the insurgency. The external threat facing Iraq put a greater strain on the FID operations conducted by SOF.

This blending of external and internal threats took many forms. Violence from elements of the former regime, anti-coalition and anti-Iraqi violence, sectarian violence, terrorist acts from radical Muslim groups, and other destabilizing actions threatened the stability of Iraq. Therefore, the FID mission in Iraq was not a preemptive situation. It was more describable as a powder keg

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<sup>49</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Pub 3-07.1: Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), B-1.

of many hostile actors. Any confusion on the identity of the actual threat was accompanied by further confusion on how to combat the threat. Confusion on how to combat this web of threat was exacerbated by a lack of an Internal Defense and Development strategy from the Iraqi government.

Another important prerequisite is the fact that the host nation has or is willing to create an IDAD strategy. This IDAD strategy is the blueprint for how to combat the identified internal threat potentially using all elements of national power from both supported and supporting nations. During this time period in Iraq the SFODAs did not receive any guidance resembling an IDAD strategy from the Coalitional Provisional Authority, the Commander Central Command, the Combined Joint Task Force-7, or the Iraqi Governing Council. The idea for an Iraqi Special Operations Forces brigade came from the CFSOCC and was mostly focused on killing or capturing threats to the new Iraqi government.<sup>50</sup>

Under U.S. control, what was in the best interest of the Iraqi unit was not taken in to consideration. This was evident in their baptism by fire when the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC battalion was sent to Fallujah to support 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) operations in April of 2004. An operations order from the headquarters elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Armor Division ordered the 36<sup>th</sup> ICDC battalion to serve in Fallujah. Although the order could not task the SOF advisors, the Combined Army Special Operations Task Force-52 authorized the combat advisory support. Other than initial movement guidance and some unit coordination, the division provided little additional guidance. The tactical significance was minimal compared to the overwhelming strategic success the Iraqi battalion made in participating in the Fallujah mission.

A large majority of ICDC working for the Marines in Fallujah deserted or actually turned against the coalition forces. The two new Iraqi Army battalions quit in route to Fallujah. In contrast, the 36th ICDC Battalion successfully participated in combat operations in Fallujah and

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<sup>50</sup> Guidance from CENTCOM CFSOCC received by SFODAs during pre-mission planning.



earned the respect of many of the Marines in the 1st Regimental Combat Team (RCT). After combat operations in Fallujah, the 1st Cavalry Division used the 36th ICDC battalion as a model for all of their other ICDC programs. This fact is another measure of success of the deployment. Sadly, these accomplishments were not overtly exploited via military information operations.

Utilizing information operations to exploit the 36th ICDC battalion success was a priority task for USSF advisors during operations in Fallujah. One detachment utilized newspaper reporters to help exploit the fact that the 36th ICDC was the only Iraqi security force that was fighting in Fallujah. A few press articles were positive and helped spread the success of the 36th ICDC Battalion in open source news but it was basically small news. The fact that no American or Iraqi headquarters or government body fully understood the correct employment of the special unit or how to exploit their successes is one symptom of an absent, incomplete and/or non-proliferated IDAD strategy.

The last prerequisite requires that the host nation provide the preponderance of forces toward their internal defense. The decision to disband the Iraqi Army and all its structure had significant implication on the application of FID. Special Forces detachments had to establish an entire battalion sized unit and the entire infrastructure from nothing while simultaneously conducting combat operations. This was perhaps the prerequisite with the largest amount of consequences and the next discussion is on the consequences of not meeting these prerequisites.

The following discussion will demonstrate the strains of developing a unit from virtually nothing on the Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha using the DOTMLPF construct.<sup>51</sup> This discussion will serve as description of the FID effort within the scope of this contemporary analysis. (Doctrine) The battalion's initial operational capability charter was to be able to conduct offensive operations such as reconnaissance, surveillance, raids, and cordon and search

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<sup>51</sup> Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF).

operations. Because of an abbreviated timeline for training and a rush for employment, the USSF advisors implemented U.S. Army doctrine to allow ease of training and ensure interoperability with U.S. forces. Another fact that enabled the use of U.S. doctrine was that the former Iraqi army did not possess a special unit that conducted the commando type missions that the 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion would eventually perform. A negative aspect of the situation was a void of doctrinal materials in both Arabic and Kurdish that would facilitate US SOF advisors in training the trainers.

(Organization) The 36<sup>th</sup> Commando battalion was organized into four commando companies supported by a battalion headquarters. The headquarters element maintained control of a scout platoon to gather human intelligence for the battalion. Initially the disposition of the Iraqi battalion's basing and area of operation was spread across Baghdad. However, USSF advisors organized their own consolidation of the battalion at one FOB to ease support requirements and facilitate an operational tempo cycle. One organizational deficiency that was still not resolved during the time period of this contemporary analysis was the need for service and support specialties organized under a headquarters and headquarters company. Not all of the Iraqi soldiers that completed the initial training to make up the core of the unit were fit for special operations duties. Because of operational security, force protection and loyalty reasons, USSF advisors desired to place these men in combat support roles to allow them to continue to serve in the special operations unit. The challenge to the USSF advisors was additional training, command structure, organization and integration of these additional support troops. In summary, the USSF advisors quickly identified voids in the initial unit organization but had to implement recommended changes almost by themselves in an attempt to maintain continuous combat readiness and effectiveness.

(Training) The short initial training period prior to deeming the unit fully operational has already been discussed within this paper. After the core body of the unit received their six days of conventional led Initial Entry Training and ten days of SOF led training, the unit was deemed

fully operational. After which, training mostly came in the form of on-the-job training and was concurrent with combat operations. Because there was a need to maintain continuous combat operations the advisors implemented an operational tempo cycle that allowed for rapid response. The cycles facilitated combat employment, better unit training time management, and allowed for leave time. What was lacking in training was the need for a special selection process after the initial training and additional USSF advisor support, neither was received. Also, the responsibility for basic entry training of those recruits selected off the street fell on the U.S. advisors. This requirement fell on top of the advanced skills training, selection, staff training, officer, and non-commissioned officer training already being conducted.

(Materiel) An additional task of the USSF advisors was to develop a table of organization and equipment without any additional guidance on what kind of equipment the unit should have. One of the simplest tasks that proved difficult to accomplish was providing the unit with a standard uniform. The unit began with a mix match of poorly constructed Iraqi uniforms and U.S. chocolate chip pattern fatigues. Eventually the unit received a one-time purchase of desert Lithuanian uniforms. The major question was whether or not to outfit the unit with U.S. weapons and equipment. The sister unit of the 36<sup>th</sup> Commando, the Iraqi Counterterrorist Task Force (ICTF), was already equipped with the best U.S. weapons and specialty gear. One great consideration was the condition of the indigenous AK-47 assault rifles and the lack of supporting load-carrying equipment. The AK-47 rifle and standard issue ammunition vest was deemed less than conducive for close quarters combat operations and long duration operations. Another capability gap within the Iraqi unit was vehicle support. Land Rovers were purchased but they did not have the required capacity to transport the entire unit nor were they combat platforms designed for high intensity conflict. The SF advisors acquired large cargo support vehicles from confiscated materials captured by the coalition forces. Ultimately, the US advisors produced a table of organization and equipment and requested \$1.5 million to outfit the unit with U.S. style weapons and equipment. That request was never filled.

(Leadership and Education) Within the unit, most of the officers had not received any officer training. Many were selected from a perceived leadership potential during basic training. The few that had served as officers in the former Iraqi Army did not serve at the field grade rank and had not received training that prepared them for command by their own country's standards. The same held true for the non-commissioned officer corps. The U.S. advisors were in desperate need of professional officer and non-commissioned officer school support from the conventional forces. The unit did receive an allotment of slots for these professional development schools but they did not meet the demand and still had to be augmented with additional SOF training. The USSF advisors also had to absorb the requirement to train on other important areas such as staff skills, military justice, and rules of engagement.

(Personnel) As stated before the battalion had a personnel strength of 540 men. The first point of friction was in personnel manning. After an initial spike in effort to recruit and provide basic entry training in December of 2003, the conventional personnel support lessened. The Iraqi unit and their advisors eventually became responsible for their own recruiting in order to fulfill the manning requirements. Other points of friction came in the specific areas of pay and medical requirements in support of those personnel. Several USSF advisors were charged monthly with receiving, handling, and distributing the entire battalion monthly payroll in cash. Because of corruption, this duty could not be solely handed to the Iraqi adjutant and his payroll officer. With regard to medical support, the Special Forces medics practiced limited preventative medical treatment but did not have the time or proper medication supply to develop a routine sick call. In theory, sick and wounded soldiers were supposed to receive medical care from Iraqi civilian facilities. This was a huge oversight because it was a force protection and operational security risk. Most of the time the USSF advisors coerced U.S. medical facilities to treat the indigenous unit personnel.

(Facilities) The last area to discuss is facilities. Because of the decision to disband the Iraqi Army and the amount of damage to most military installations, the USSF advisors had to

spend a great deal of time on contracting infrastructure and land management. The advisors had to acquire many different facilities for barracks, bath, dining, headquarters, gym, recreation, medical, and training. Several advisors were charged with the management of large contracts for dining, bath, and maintenance. USSF advisors spent a great deal of time ensuring all facilities met minimum force protection requirements and quality of life standards. These activities coupled with many of the above aforementioned duties were constant distracters from the actual training and employment of the Iraqi battalion.

By applying a suggested set of doctrinally based FID prerequisites to a contemporary FID operation in Iraq we gained an understanding of the importance of those prerequisites. This chapter has shown that combat FID operations conducted by SOF in support of the Iraqi 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion did not meet all the FID prerequisites. Additionally, the DOTMLPF discussion showed the strains caused by veering away from doctrine. In reality, two Special Forces Operational Detachments Alpha fulfilled the above-mentioned requirements for a 540 man indigenous battalion. Both these detachments totaled 24 advisors at maximum strength.<sup>52</sup> Ultimately, FID support to the Iraqi 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion was not a good example of doctrinal FID operations.

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<sup>52</sup> Initially two SFODAs and a split team shared the advisory mission but by May 2004 the split team was released of its advisor duties.

## **FID, Security Force Assistance and Africa Command (AFRICOM)**

As previously stated, a better understanding of FID is needed as we look past OEF and OIF and focus on the broad effort of the Global War on Terrorism. The establishment of a new geographic combatant command in Africa implies the potential for an increase in military operations within that country. More of a critical analysis needs to be conducted in order to understand the implications of an increase in military assistance on the African continent. The change in foreign policy from nation assistance to nation building, the potential for increased military operations in Africa and the establishment of AFRICOM is the impetus to review and understand our military advisory doctrine and policies. Commanders and planners must understand the difference between Security Force Assistance and FID and how to apply them within the Nation Assistance structure.

This chapter identifies the significance of understanding military advisement using the AFRICOM area of responsibility as a backdrop. The Fund for Peace's failed state index for 2007 lists eighteen African countries that are in danger of falling into the failed state category.<sup>53</sup> A closer look may reveal that a number of these failed or failing states have internal threats. There is also a high probability that these countries do not have any sort of IDAD strategy to combat their internal threats. Although these countries seem eligible for FID assistance, many of these countries may have active insurgent activities past the initial phase, which is counter to the underlying preemptive nature of FID support to a country's IDAD strategy.

Another fact that has significant bearing on the topics under discussion is that over 85 percent of SOF was deployed in support of CENTCOM AOR in 2006 which does not allow for

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<sup>53</sup> Fund for Peace's failed state index for 2007 lists these African countries as endanger of failing: Sudan Somalia, Zimbabwe, Chad, Ivory Coast, DROC, Guinea, Central African Republic, Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Republic of Congo, Liberia, Kenya, Niger, Malawi. [http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140) (accessed February 3, 2008).

global FID support against terror.<sup>54</sup> U.S. Pacific Command currently combats insurgencies in the Philippines as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The establishment of U.S. Africa Command suggests a potential for increased advisory support within that AOR. U.S. Special Forces begins growing by one battalion per active duty group per year in 2008 but that growth will not be complete until 2012.<sup>55</sup> In addition to the current requirements in CENTCOM, there are continuing advisory requirements in PACOM AOR and potential for more requirements within the AFRICOM AOR.

It is speculated that most of these military advisement requirements in Africa will not meet the ideal prerequisites for FID operations conducted by SOF. If the basic, doctrinally based, FID pre-requisites recommended in this monograph aren't met, then leaders should take measures that mitigate the negative consequences that arise from not meeting these FID prerequisites. Examples of actions that would mitigate some of these consequences include supplemental manning, increase emphasis on unified action, and a detailed focus on building a cogent IDAD strategy. Another alternative is to task conventional forces to conduct limited FID or another form of military advisement under the umbrella of Nation Assistance.

Instead of limited FID, another useful tool could be the use of conventional forces for the conduct of Security Force Assistance in order to build a viable army from the ground up. At a certain decision point, military advisory efforts could be turned over to SOF for the implementation of FID if necessary. Emerging doctrine defines Security Force Assistance as “all U.S. government actions taken in concert with a host nation to generate, employ, transition, and sustain the host nation’s security forces in support of their national requirements, U.S. Theater

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<sup>54</sup> United States Special Operations Command, *USSOCOM Posture Statement 2007*. (MacDill Air Force Base, FL, 2007), 11.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 12-15.

Security Cooperation plans, operations plans, contingency plans, and operations”.<sup>56</sup> The SFA concept is more conducive for conventional forces and might be a better intervention for large military advisory situations such as those potentially required in Africa.

With regard for support to the GWOT, there are as many advisory missions that are appropriate for SOF but SOF is in limited supply. Conventional forces either conducting limited FID or SFA could perform many of those missions. As part of U.S. foreign policy and the introduction of AFRICOM, there could be an increase in host nation requested U.S. military assistance. The threat to the host nation may be both internal and external. It can be speculated that host nations that have problems governing probably will not have an IDAD. They must, however, be capable and willing to create one. The requirement of the host nation to provide the preponderance of forces is required because of U.S. foreign policy, domestic pressures, and global requirements. In order to avoid the pitfalls seen in the contemporary analysis of FID in Iraq, Commanders and planners must understand the difference between Security Force Assistance and FID and how to apply them within the Nation Assistance structure.

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<sup>56</sup> Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance, *Security Force Assistance Planner's Guide Draft*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2006), 5.



## Recommendation

FID conducted by SOF and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts must remain separate missions. The conventional military should adopt the JCISFA emerging doctrine for Security Force Assistance as their base doctrinal guide for conducting large-scale military advisement. If FID pre-requisites aren't met in an area, then recommend using conventional forces to conduct SFA to build up a viable army simultaneous with a unified effort to strengthen the countries IDAD strategy. Once the conditions are set, the advisory effort could be turned over to SOF for the implementation of FID if necessary.

The purpose of this paper was not to argue that we should rigidly remain with doctrine. On the contrary, we should understand doctrine, its logic, and origins to assess if it is still relevant in the contemporary environment. If not, then we must endeavor to change doctrine to make it more applicable. Any doctrinal change recommendations will be left for further research and are not within the scope of this monograph. Furthermore, the protection of “rice bowls” was also not in the purview of this paper. FID is not the sole domain of Special Operations Forces. Certain advisory missions meet the recommended FID prerequisites argued within this paper and other advisory missions exceed or strain the capabilities of SOF. To clarify the point made in the Army's new field manual on COIN, military advisement is a “Big Army” mission but that does not necessarily imply FID.<sup>57</sup> General and special purpose forces must understand their roles in FID, limited FID, and Security Force Assistance within the current operating environment.

The violation of one of the suggested prerequisites does not imply the absolute exclusion of SOF. If SOF are absolutely imperative for the advisory mission but one of the suggested pre-requisites cannot be met, commanders and planners should adjust for that area that is lacking. There must be an application of art in the adjustment of doctrine to deal with the consequences of

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<sup>57</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency*. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Publishing Directorate, 2006), 6-3.

violating these prerequisites. One example is to increase the doctrinal force ratio for training especially while conducting concurrent combat operations. This solution could call for an increase to the number of Special Forces detachments that would normally train and advise indigenous troops in optimal circumstances. Another potential solution could come in the form of an increased commander's presence from the company or battalion level and/or greater staff integration into the advisory mission. Another avenue may be to augment SOF with extra support personnel for specific areas such as contracting, financing, infrastructure, and intelligence work. These recommended solutions may not fit every situation and is definitely not meant to be all-inclusive. These recommendations are only suggestions of potential courses of action and definitely require further research to provide more concrete solutions.

There are four other areas that require further research. First, more research needs to be conducted to establish a common Joint, Inter-agency, Inter-governmental, and Military (JIIM) understanding of the IDAD strategy concept. In addition there should be additional research to determine the need for a doctrinal addition within the Department of Defense and/or Department of State on IDAD development support to a weak or failed state. Additional research should attempt to assess the need for an increase in conventional performance of limited FID in response to the COE or GWOT. Lastly, more research should assess the feasibility for conventional forces adoption of the JCISFA emerging doctrine for Security Force Assistance as their doctrinal base for large-scale military advisement.

This paper has used FID operations in Iraq to highlight the problems that arise at the tactical level when the recommended FID prerequisites are not met. The establishment of the Iraqi 36<sup>th</sup> Commando Battalion and subsequent FID operations involving combat were phenomenal successes. However, that success is more attributable to the "can do" attitude of the SOF operators and less to a textbook example of the conditions set for successful FID operations. FID prerequisites must be applied during the troop to task assessment when considering SOF for an advisory mission. If these prerequisites aren't met, then commanders and planners must

mitigate any negative consequences that arise. If the advisory mission is more applicable to conventional forces then they should be considered for limited FID operations. If a large-scale advisory mission requires building a foreign army from virtually nothing, the conventional forces should be given Security Force Assistance as their task. Ultimately, this is an economy of force issue that seeks to recommend the best use of a limited resource.

By legislative mandate SOF forces conduct FID as a core task. However FID is not the sole domain of the Special Operations Forces. Conventional forces have proven they can conduct limited FID operations in support of a host nation government. A graying of responsibility and strain on SOF arises in large-scale military advisory missions like those conducted in Iraq. Clearly, the establishment of a foreign military from virtually nothing is outside the abilities of SOF. In order to enable commanders and staff planners to doctrinally employ SOF within the FID task, FID operations conducted by SOF and conventionally conducted foreign military advisory efforts must remain separate missions

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